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# International Narcotics Biweekly Review

**24 May 1978**

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INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS BIWEEKLY REVIEW

24 May 1978

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The articles in this publication are prepared by analysts in the National Foreign Assessment Center primarily for specialists in the Washington community who are interested in international narcotics matters. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles or to [redacted]

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NOTEWORTHY POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

(Editor's Note: These items, produced for another CIA publication, do not deal specifically with the international narcotics situation. They are included because they concern developing situations that could impact on the international narcotics control effort.)



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AFGHANISTAN: Near East and South Asian Reaction to the Coup

The military coup in Kabul on 27 April was a shock to most of the governments of South Asia and the Near East. Most quickly concluded that the new government was Communist and pro-Soviet, and some believed that Moscow had ordered the coup that brought an end to President Daoud's five-year rule. Although the new government has tried to reassure its neighbors, these suspicions persist.

Those governments with significant dissidence at home are also concerned that local Communists, emboldened by the Communist success in Afghanistan, might attempt to seize power, or even that Moscow might order and support such an attempt. These fears have been expressed not only in the monarchies such as Nepal and Iran and by the moderately conservative military government in Pakistan, but even in Syria, where President Assad sees a number of similarities between his situation and Daoud's.

Many countries are concerned that the coup has upset the balance of power in the region. In Egypt, Iran, and Pakistan those worries are heightened by the recent failure of the US to intervene in the Horn of Africa and by its apparent lack of interest in taking any action in Afghanistan. Many are also concerned about the fate of Islam under the new regime.

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Despite these concerns, the nations of the region apparently have decided that their best course is to wait and see how the new government performs, in the meantime maintaining diplomatic relations with Kabul in hopes of encouraging the government to pursue the moderate domestic and foreign policies it has announced. Reinforcing this view is the lack of a real alternative.

Pakistan

The Pakistanis are the most worried by the installation of what they perceive as a Soviet-controlled Communist government in Afghanistan. Despite public [redacted]

[redacted] assurances from Kabul, they expect a revival of the longstanding Pushtunistan dispute involving Pakistan's two western provinces. Many Pakistani leaders expect that ultimately Kabul, instigated and supported by Moscow, will attempt to annex these provinces, thereby giving the USSR access to the Indian Ocean. If Moscow's plan succeeds, Pakistanis would expect India to occupy their eastern provinces, ending Pakistan's existence as an independent country.

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Even if the impact of the Afghan coup were to be less catastrophic than the worst fears of many Pakistanis, they would still expect to be troubled by significant Soviet and Afghan meddling with tribes near the border, increased diplomatic pressure from Moscow and New Delhi, and a greatly strengthened leftist movement at home.

Islamabad, nevertheless, has recognized the new government and intends to try to maintain good relations with it in hopes of encouraging Kabul to establish some degree of independence from Moscow and to encourage it to abide by its announced policies.

At the same time, however, the Pakistanis are taking steps to deal with the Afghan threat. Army units have been moved closer to the border--probably as much to remind the Afghans of Pakistani military strength as to meet any Afghan incursion--a stepped-up effort is under way to win the support of tribes along the border, and Pakistan is seeking increased military and economic aid from both the West and the Near Eastern oil producers.

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Pakistan's fears may be somewhat unrealistic, and even deliberately exaggerated when expressed to potential aid donors. If Daoud were still in power, Pakistan would still be seeking economic and military aid, although giving different reasons for its need. Nevertheless, many Pakistanis sincerely believe that the coup has significantly increased the dangers to Pakistan's survival, and Afghanistan will be a far more important factor in Pakistani decisions on almost any issue than it has been in the past.

Iran

Iran, despite a long history of tension with Afghanistan, had improved its relations with Kabul in recent years and had become an important source of economic aid. At one point, Tehran considered--but never implemented--economic assistance for Afghanistan that would have surpassed the Soviet program.

The Shah shares most of Pakistan's fears about the new government, and in addition sees himself as confronted with a rising threat from dissidents at home and virtually encircled by the USSR and its allies, Iraq and now Afghanistan. Nevertheless, he is prepared to give the new government in Kabul a chance to prove its national independence and its nonalignment. For the time being, Iran is prepared to continue economic aid projects to Afghanistan, presumably to encourage any nationalist components in the new ruling group. Iran is likely to use the coup as an additional argument to secure US support.

India

India is primarily important to Afghanistan because of its dominant position in the subcontinent and specifically because it serves as a military counterweight to Pakistan. Relations between the two countries have generally been good, and--with Indian Foreign Minister Vajpayee's visit to Kabul last September and Afghan President Daoud's visit to New Delhi in March--appeared to be growing even closer.

India was one of the first to recognize the new government in Kabul. It is India's policy to recognize

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governments in power, regardless of ideology. Nevertheless, coups are anathema to Indian thinking, and the Indians probably have had more misgivings about the Taraki takeover than they are willing to admit. Indian officials have preferred to characterize the new Afghan leaders as strong nationalists rather than Communists and have urged outsiders to wait and see what new policies emerge from Kabul. India, however, objects to heavy foreign influence in any country and will be dismayed if Soviet influence becomes preponderant in Afghanistan.

Indian officials believe their most prudent course is to cultivate cordial relations with the new Afghan leaders and to attempt to play a moderating role if necessary. The Indians maintain that their nonaligned credentials enable them to deal as neutrals and should give them access to the highest levels of the new government.

Egypt

Egypt is important to Afghanistan almost solely because of its leadership role in the Arab world. The Egyptian press has reported that Cairo has decided to recognize Afghanistan's new regime. [ ] the Egyptians see the Afghan coup as the latest example of Soviet expansion in the Third World, and one--like the Horn of Africa--that has not evoked an adequate Western response. Egypt will be sympathetic to the Shah's fears of encirclement and Pakistani apprehensions about Soviet-backed attempts to exploit Pushtunistan.

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Libya

Libya withheld recognition of the new regime in Afghanistan until Foreign Minister Turayki completed a hurriedly arranged trip to Kabul. Libya presumably welcomed the advent of a more "progressive" regime, but presumably wants to sound out the new government's attitude on Muslim and Middle East issues and gain a clearer picture of its relations with the USSR. Turayki apparently was satisfied, and Libya formally recognized Afghanistan on 11 May. The announcement included no mention, however, of whether Libya intends to honor economic and technical agreements worked out last March with former President Daoud.

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Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has not been among the major aid donors to Afghanistan, but the Daoud government realized its potential and shortly before the coup had won Saudi agreement to examine the funding of Afghan development projects. In addition, the Afghans, even more than most Muslims, have looked to Saudi Arabia for religious leadership.

Saudi Arabia moved slowly to recognize the new government and acted only after receiving assurances that the new rulers were Muslims and intended to keep Afghanistan a Muslim country. The Saudis are still skeptical and intend to watch the situation closely.

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Noteworthy Political and Economic Developments



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IRAN: Widespread Disorders

Major new disorders spearheaded by fundamentalist Muslim leaders opposed to the Shah's modernization programs broke out across Iran last week. It was the fourth and most serious such outbreak this year, triggering violence on university campuses and tying up police and many Army troops for days.

Similar demonstrations occurred in each of the first three months of the year. The first round was centered in the religious center of Qom, the second in the city of Tabriz, and the third in Yazd, although each time less violent disorders occurred in other cities as well.

The latest disturbances, which began on 9 May, also erupted first in Qom and were most severe there and in Tabriz.

[redacted] at least 20 people were killed in the two cities. Property damage was reported to be heaviest in Qom, where rioters badly damaged four police stations, destroyed the headquarters of the Resurgence Party--the regime's political arm--and burned 400 automobiles.

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This week, Qom remained under martial law with some 1,000 troops, accompanied by Chieftain tanks, on guard at key intersections and near mosques. Nationwide, the new outbreak of Muslim dissidence appeared to have lost momentum, although the security situation was still volatile in Tehran and Tabriz.

At the height of the disorders, the Shah postponed a scheduled visit to Eastern Europe in order to supervise the tactics of his security forces in dealing with demonstrators. By 16 May, however, he considered the situation

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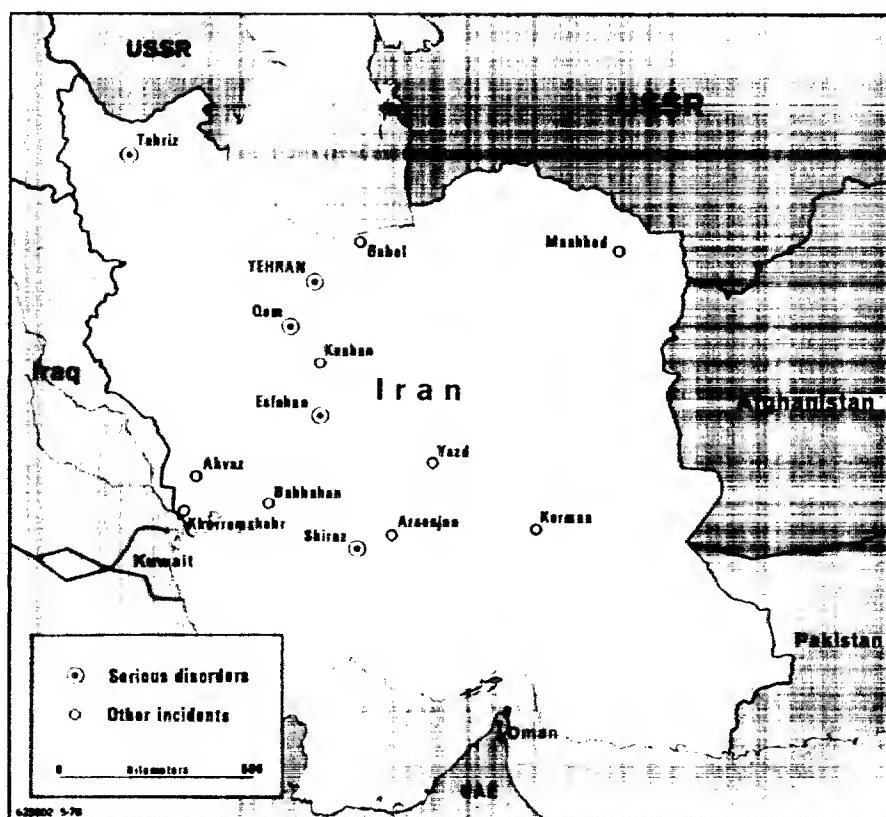
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sufficiently well in hand to depart on a one-week trip to Bulgaria and Hungary.

The cycle of violence that began in early January apparently is being coordinated by Muslim leaders in Qom, the main center of religious fundamentalism. The most serious disorders clearly have been fomented by local Muslim clergymen who have incited the masses in mosques across the country by denouncing the Shah's modernization programs in fiery sermons.

The Shah is frustrated with his failure to contain the unrest and seems baffled on how to deal with the underlying causes of the Muslim dissidence. There appears to be little room for compromise between the monarch and his conservative Muslim opponents who believe that reforms instituted by the Shah and his father threaten the future of Islam in Iran. The Shah is gambling that his program of modernization has enough popular support to allow him to continue taking stern measures against the conservative Muslims.

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MALAYSIA-THAILAND: BILATERAL CONFERENCE POINTS TO CLOSER COOPERATION IN COMBATING NARCOTICS SMUGGLING IN BORDER AREA. Thai and Malaysian officials held an "unofficial conference" in early May to discuss the increasing problem of heroin traffic across the Thai-Malaysian border. US representatives attended the meeting and were optimistic regarding its accomplishments. All participants appeared to view the joint meeting as an initial step in trying to neutralize the flow of heroin across the border. The exchange of information during the conference indicated that both of the principals were aware of the major trafficking patterns in the area and of the use of fish and charcoal trucks to move the heroin. There was also considerable agreement on the need to improve communications links between the two countries and on the need for joint antinarcotics operations in the border area. Another bilateral meeting will be held soon to discuss narcotics smuggling along the coast of the Andaman Sea where traffickers use small boats to transport opiates from Thailand to Malaysia. A third conference has also tentatively been scheduled to be held in Kuala Lumpur with Singapore also invited to attend.

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ARGENTINA: GOVERNMENT VIEWING NARCOTICS SITUATION MORE SERIOUSLY. The Government of Argentina is beginning to take a harder look at the international narcotics problem and is showing signs of more cooperation in the international effort. The Argentine National Narcotics Council (CONATON), a policy-level group composed of representatives from six ministries, has obtained executive orders barring the cultivation of opium poppies and marijuana. It has also obtained an executive order which will authorize the implementation of a previously legislated ban on the importation of coca leaves. The Argentine Government has also agreed to the reestablishment of the bilateral US-Argentina Narcotics Commission which was originally created in 1972. A ceremony formally reinstating the commission is scheduled to be held on 16 June 1978.

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AFGHANISTAN: CONFISCATED OPIUM MAY AGAIN BE FOR SALE.

The new Afghanistan Government issued a decree on 13 May stating that all smuggled goods confiscated by the previous governments and stored in warehouses will be "used to benefit the people and the national economy." The Embassy in Kabul notes that there may be several tons of opium included in these seizures. The Daoud government was trying to sell the confiscated opium on the international licit market prior to the coup late last month. [redacted]

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SWITZERLAND: SWISS MAY SOON CONTRIBUTE TO UNFDAC.

According to a Swiss official, a contribution to the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control has been under consideration by the government of Switzerland for some time but had been given low priority because of the Swiss budgetary restraints. A parliamentary message is currently in preparation requesting that about \$50,000 be contributed to UNFDAC; if all goes well, the Federal Council should approve the request by the end of June and parliament approve before the end of the year. In that case, the contribution can be made to the UN fund by April 1979. [redacted]

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THE NETHERLANDS: NO INTENTION TO LEGALIZE CANNABIS.

The Embassy reports that, contrary to what the Dutch representative told the UN Narcotic Drugs Committee in Geneva last April, the Netherlands does not want to amend the Single Convention to permit the legalization of cannabis. Apparently such a position was taken by an interdepartmental committee two years ago but has since been abandoned as an official policy of the government. The new Dutch State Secretary for Public Health opposes even decriminalization of the cannabis family of drugs, including hashish, marijuana, and other related drugs. [redacted]

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BOLIVIA: BAN ON NEW COCA PLANTINGS WILL NOT BE ENFORCED UNTIL AFTER THE JULY ELECTIONS. According to recent information from the Embassy in La Paz, the government of Bolivia, as of 30 November 1977, established a ban on new coca plantings on registered lands. Spot checks of the coca-growing areas, however, have disclosed an obvious increase of new illegal plantings. Principally because of the national presidential

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elections scheduled for 9 July 1978, the government does not intend to proceed at this time with its planned public destruction of the illegal plantings. The government reportedly fears that such action would adversely arouse the peasant-farmer population in the coca-growing areas and the election process would be disrupted. At least one presidential candidate has assured that, following the elections, the law against increased and illegal coca production will be fully enforced. In the meantime, the government is documenting the ownership and locations of illegal coca cultivation in preparation for later legal action. [redacted]

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BAHAMAS--Colombian Marijuana Reported Pouring into Bahamas--TNDD, No. L/7779, 17 May 1978, pp. 48-50. According to the Nassau press, marijuana is literally pouring into the Bahamas from every direction and is destined for the North American continent. The press claimed that in the first three and a half months of 1978, authorities have confiscated an estimated \$6 million dollars worth of the "Colombian Gold."

BULGARIA--Polish Report on Narcotics Trafficking in Bulgaria--TNDD, No. L/7759, pp. 69-72. The article describes in some detail the heavy truck traffic between Europe and countries of the Middle East and South Asia and describes how the cargoes traveling under international documentation and seal often include illicit drugs--especially hashish. According to the article, it is mainly hashish that is smuggled through Bulgaria, and the destinations of the shipments coming from Turkey and Afghanistan through Bulgaria and Yugoslavia are Vienna, Munich, and Amsterdam. A great deal of the "Bulgarian" contraband reportedly also reaches West Berlin. The press report claimed that 126 narcotics and drug smugglers were detected by Bulgarian customs inspectors last year, and nearly a ton of various types of narcotics were seized. The item claimed that over 400,000 trucks transit Bulgaria each year, and the overwhelming majority of them are 20- or 30-ton TIR trucks. Nearly 1.4 million passenger cars travel the same route or a total of close to 10,000 vehicles per day. The item claimed further that farm products are among the favorites used as cover for Turkish

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smugglers, who cross Bulgaria en masse three or four times a year. Narcotics are also reportedly transported by train, where they are particularly difficult to detect.

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GREECE--Italian Freighter Drug Arrest--TNDD, No. L/7766, p. 50. Eight members of the crew of an Italian-owned small freighter flying the Panamanian flag were arrested recently in Crete when over two tons of hashish worth about \$43,000,000 was discovered aboard the ship. The crew included Italians, Greeks, and Zambians; the vessel was bound from Lebanon to a West European port.

INDIA--Big Narcotics Haul in Bombay--TNDD, No. L/7779, 17 May 1978, p. 14. Customs officers recently seized 130 kilograms of hashish and 10 kilograms of opium from an air cargo complex at the airport in Bombay. The contraband was concealed in a shipment of handicraft goods and was being exported to the United States and Canada.

INDONESIA--Opium From Saudi Arabia Seized in Java--TNDD, No. L/7766, pp. 13-14. Indonesian authorities recently seized 4.6 kilograms of "Saudi Arabian" opium and arrested five persons involved in the illicit drug trafficking. The narcotics apparently were called "Saudi Arabian" because the original sale was made in Mecca by a visiting pilgrim. According to those arrested, the opium had entered Indonesia in a shipment of tinned dates. The traffic is believed to be the work of an international opium syndicate, as some of those involved are too poor to pay the price of a pilgrimage to Mecca let alone purchase expensive narcotics.

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MALAYSIA--Acute Drug Problem Among School Children--TNDD,  
No. L/7779, p. 21. The government is viewing the drug abuse problem, especially among school children, with growing concern, according to the Minister of Education. He said that 70 percent of the known drug addicts in the country last year were below 25 years of age, and another 2 percent were about 15 years of age.

SINGAPORE--Preventive Steps, Tough Anti-Drug Laws Urged--  
TNDD, No. L/7779, p. 24. There has been a phenomenal growth in heroin use and addiction during the past three years according to the local press. For example, 2,262 persons were arrested in 1975 on charges of using heroin; in 1976 this figure had more than doubled. The drug problem has also spread to the Singapore armed forces where an estimated 1 percent are drug abusers. In their all-out war against narcotics smugglers and pushers, the authorities have invoked the Criminal Law Act which allows a suspected trafficker to be detained without trial for an indefinite period. The Drug Act has also been amended to provide for the mandatory death sentence for those convicted of trafficking more than 15 grams of heroin or more than 30 grams of morphine. The first hanging for heroin trafficking in Singapore occurred in late April.

THAILAND--Seized "Thon Buri" Heroin Found Nearly Pure--  
TNDD, No. L/7779, pp. 43-46. The heroin seized recently from a drug refinery in Thon Buri is described as a different type of heroin and can be sniffed, injected, or taken orally. According to Thai experts, the heroin, known as Special No. 1 is only 1 percent short of the purest white powder known as No. 4 heroin. It is the first of its kind to be seized in Thailand; police confiscated 60 kilograms of the drug last month. The drug reportedly was packed and ready for shipment to European markets; apparently the refinery had been in operation for some time. This is said to be the first crackdown on a heroin laboratory in the capital in the past five years.

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TURKEY--Security Forces Discover Illegal Opium Fields--

TNDD, No. L/7759, p. 106. Inspection of opium cultivation in Konya Province is continuing. During recent inspections, provincial gendarmerie units found that unauthorized opium poppies were being cultivated over an area about 2.5 hectares. The unauthorized poppies were destroyed by the authorities, and 11 farmers were taken into custody on charges of unauthorized opium poppy cultivation. (It appears likely, however, that these were farmers who had exceeded their licensed growing areas rather than an attempt by would-be traffickers to raise an illicit crop. Konya is one of the few areas where controlled opium poppy cultivation is authorized. Poppies will grow in almost all of Turkey's 67 provinces and any attempt to grow poppies illegally probably would not occur in an area like Konya which is under intensive surveillance.)

SOUTH AFRICA--Transkei Dagga Imports Seized--TNDD, No. L/7759, p. 104. Dagga, an African form of marijuana, from Transkei was seized last month by the Narcotics Bureau. Thirty persons were arrested and 10 cars were seized. The police claimed that large quantities of Dagga were being brought into Natal because of the apparent successful harvest in Transkei. (There have been other indications that South Africa may be playing a larger role in drug trafficking than has previously been suspected. An earlier press item suggested that money from the major LSD operation in the UK may have found its way into South Africa. Another item appearing last month in the German periodical Stern written by Walter Unger, discussing the Latin American drug threat to the US, referred to "men who pull the strings" sitting in South Africa.)

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